

Remarks:

The applicant disagrees with the Examiner's contentions stated in paragraph 1 of the Office Action. However, in an effort to expedite the prosecution of this application, the specification has been amended in the manner noted in paragraph 1 of the Office Action.

Claim 15 has been cancelled in favor of claim 23 presented in this preliminary amendment. It is respectfully submitted that new claim 23 is written in appropriate form. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the objections to claim 15 noted in paragraph 2 of the Office Action.

Claims 15 and 16 have been cancelled in favor of claims 23 and 24 stated above in this preliminary amendment. The alleged infirmities noted by the Examiner with respect to claims 15 and 16 are not present in new claims 23 and 24. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to confirm that new claims 23 and 24 are not subject to rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph for the reasons stated in the previous Office Action.

The currently pending claims include the following claim element:

“the ink image being visible to a user of a motor vehicle when the automobile interior component is mounted in the motor vehicle and providing information to the user with respect to safe use of the motor vehicle.”

It is respectfully submitted that the above-noted claim element is fully supported by, described in, and enabled by the originally filed specification. See, for example, paragraph 3 of the originally filed specification, which refers to “instructions, warnings and helpful icons or indicia” that “assist the user in the safe use of their automobile.” Examples given in the specification of such indicia include, for example, an icon showing the location of a keyhole formed in the motor vehicle door. An example of such indicia that is formed in accordance with an aspect of this invention is shown in Figures 1-3, which illustrate a pad-printed keyhole locator formed on a chrome plated surface of a motor vehicle door.

Regarding the patentability issues, it is respectfully submitted that the currently pending claims should be found to be patentable over all prior art of record for a number of different reasons. An exemplary analysis in support of this conclusion follows.

The currently pending claims recite an “automobile interior component” at least a portion

of an exterior surface of which is chrome plated. Exemplary structure corresponding to this claim element can be found, for example, in Figures 1-3, which show a chrome plated molded thermoplastic component that forms a part of a motor vehicle door. A motor vehicle occupant can view the chrome plated surface of the door component when it is installed..

First, none of the prior art references cited by the Examiner (Pryor et al. USP 4,269,874, Alden USP 4,538,560, Nicoll 3,011,196 and/or Reinke USP 3,170,393) teach or suggest, for example, the use of an automobile interior component having a chrome plated surface. Pryor et al., Nicoll and Reinke each contain no disclosure of such structure. While Alden does disclose certain chrome plated engine accessories (see, for example, column 1, lines 14-17), Alden contains no disclosure of an automobile *interior* component having a chrome plated exterior surface, which is in direct contrast to the subject matter of the currently pending claims. For these reasons alone, the currently pending claims should be found to be patentable over any purported combination of the above-noted prior art, assuming, for the sake of argument, that it is proper to make such a combination.

Second, none of the above-noted prior art references, or any other prior art of record, teaches or suggests, for example, a pad printed image formed on a chrome plated surface of an automobile interior component that is visible to a motor vehicle occupant and that conveys information to the user with respect to the safe use of the motor vehicle. Alden, Reinke and Nicoll contain no disclosure of any structure that corresponds to the above-paraphrased element of the currently pending claims. All of the “uses of the invention” disclosed in Pryor et al. relate to conditions of manufacturing (see, for example, column 7, lines 35-40) which is conveyed to persons involved in the manufacture of an automobile. This has nothing to do with conveying information about the safe use of a motor vehicle to an occupant/user of the motor vehicle as claimed in the currently pending claims. For these reasons alone, the currently pending claims should be found to be patentable over a purported combination of the above-noted prior art, assuming, for the sake of argument, that it is proper to make such a combination.

Regarding the propriety of the combinations of prior art references made by the Examiner, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has provided no evidence that it would be proper to combine the prior art references together in the manner asserted. While the

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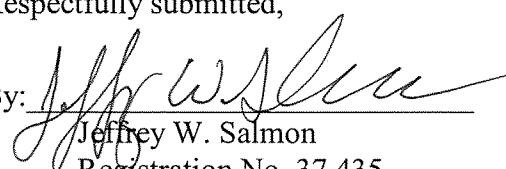
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Examiner has made a number of conclusory assertions about what a “skilled artisan” allegedly would have understood in order to combine cherry-picked portions of the prior art together, he has provided no evidentiary basis as to why a skilled artisan allegedly would have reached such understandings.

The fact that the Office Action no such teaching, or any evidence to support the conclusory assertions stated therein leads to the conclusion that the Examiner is basing his rejection of the previously pending claims on the teachings of the subject application. Doing so is improper hindsight reconstruction. For this reason, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the prior art rejections stated in the last Office Action, and confirm that the currently pending claims are patentable.

It is respectfully submitted that the new claims are in condition for allowance and, therefore, a formal notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would help expedite the prosecution of the instant application, then he is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at his convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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